THE ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION.
OPENING CONVERSAZIONE.

On Friday evening, the 5th instant, the Architectural Association met in Lyon's-Inn Hall, Strand, to open the session.* The walls presented a fair show of drawings, including several series of the sketches made by members of the Class of Design; and the room was well filled. The advantages resulting from this sketching class will be great: it should be sedulously attended by the younger members.

Letters were announced from Mr. Donaldson, Mr. Scoles, Mr. Tite, &c.

Mr. G. J. Wigley, secretary, read the report of the council, from which it appeared that the number of members had increased from 97 to 140. The committee urged the value of unrestricted interchange of opinions amongst the members, and showed the advantage that was resulting from all becoming well acquainted with each other. An attempt to form a book-club, it appeared, had not succeeded. The endeavour to establish a free architectural exhibition was very successful, and the collection had been visited by a daily average of about 500 persons. They had taken upon themselves the responsibility and risk of its permanent establishment, and they anxiously sought the concurrence and co-operation of the whole profession.

Mr. Christopher Creeke read a very able paper on various matters affecting professional practice, to which we shall devote space next week. In the course of the address it was stated that steps had been taken towards calling a meeting of the profession on the subject of Competition, and that every architect in England would be communicated with.

Mr. Godwin, being reqoested to make some observations, said the course he had pursued in respect of the Association from its foundation would, he thought, lead them to give him credit for sincerity when he stated that he was much gratified at hearing of its successful progress, and more than this, seeing the result of its operations. Many of the papers read on the alternate Fridays were most creditable to their authors, and in several instances had gained for them, as he was able to say positively, the good opinion of a large number of persons. But it was not merely at these meetings that good was done through the Association. The sketches on the walls produced on the intermediate Fridays, from given subjects, were exceedingly satisfactory evidence of the efforts of the members in another direction. Apart, however, from these proceedings, advantages resulted from association in the abstract. It seemed to him important that in our doings we should consider how they would operate on others,—that we should regard not simply their effect on ourselves, but on the well-being of our order, and this we were led to by such associations. We should find that in upholding the dignity and high character of the profession, we were best advancing our own individual interests. Never was there a moment when it was more important that architects should unite to set themselves and their profession right with the public than now; for pressed as they were on either side by circumstances of the time, their position was seriously threatened. The works of the architect, the value of design, were not recognised rightly by the public. A little matter which came under his observation a few weeks ago (and a straw might show the current) would in some degree illustrate this. An individual asked a young architect to make him "a little design" for a summer-house, and having obtained his charge for it, called upon him (the speaker) to know if the sum of two guineas, which the architect had named, was not *too* much for merely "a few lines and a bit of colour." He need not say what his answer was. But what he wanted to remark was this—that the same individual sent the drawing to a lithographer, wishing to distribute copies of it, and being charged three guineas for putting it on the stone, paid it with perfect satisfaction! The mere act of mechanically copying he could appreciate, but the value of the productive power, and the propriety of paying for what seemed such pleasant amusement for the artist, he did not understand. Architects had done much to induce this feeling and lower the character of the profession, by their indiscriminate compliance with invitations to compete, without those regulations which would ensure them justice. It gave him much pleasure to hear of the steps which had been taken by the Association towards following out the suggestions published in THE BUILDER, with the view of obtaining a proper management of competitions. The late Birmingham Union competition was a case in point, where the successful architects, after having risked the chance of getting nothing for their time and skill, had been coolly offered about 3 per cent. on the amount of their estimate. He sincerely trusted that the architects would, under the circumstances, resist any departure from the customary remuneration.* The customary remuneration! This was another point which imperatively needed settlement; and if the elder members of the profession were too much occupied, or disinclined to take steps in the matter, he hoped, when the Association had succeeded in putting competitions on a proper footing, that they would turn their attention to the question of remuneration. The speaker then alluded to the excellence of the paper which had been read by the president, and moved a vote of thanks to him.—Carried.

Mr. Papworth afterwards briefly addressed the meeting, taking up the question of a "new style," mooted by the president, and urging with ability, that all that could be expected of architects was the re-combination and thoughtful application of the modes before us, with the adaptation of modern improvements and appliances, to the wants and purposes of the day.

* "The objects of the Architectural Association are, the advancement of the study of design in Architecture, the development of true principles of criticism, and the affording means whereby the student may acquire an aptitude for the application, recombination, and extension of the present materials of the art. For the attainment of these objects, the business of the Association is to consist of the production of designs for previously determined subjects; the reading of papers on the several branches of science and art, comprehended under the term Architecture; free and open discussion; and the contribution to the Society's portfolio of subjects, displaying either originality of design, examples of construction and decoration, or modes of representation."

GAS AND HEALTH IN WARE, HERTS.

The Gas Company in Ware charged 8s. per 1,000 feet. A new company came into the town, and offered, if a certain number of persons would agree to deal with them, to construct works and supply gas at 6s. per 1,000. A meeting was called, and the old company were applied to, to know if *they* would supply it at that price, as in that case no encouragement would be given to the new company. They refused. The new company have constructed their works, and the old company are now offering gas at *four* shillings per 1,000 feet,—too late, however, the new company having, of course, obtained a written agreement from many of the inhabitants to take their gas, before the works were commenced. The relation of this occurrence may not be without its value to other Companies if they will consider it wisely.—A local board of health has been appointed here under the Health Act, and are getting to work, though, perhaps, not very vigorously at present. There was a considerable struggle at the election,—the turning point being, as it has been in some other places, "who should be *clerk* to the board." How this has operated in Ware we are not in a position to say,—the best men for the purpose may have been elected for anything we know to the contrary,—but it must be obvious that if the qualification for members of local boards is to be simply a determination to support Mr. A. as clerk against Mr. B., or *vice-versâ*, the reverse at times must be the case.

The Iron Trade.—Several of the usual quarterly meetings have been held, but the masters have deemed it advisable not to advance the nominal price previously fixed, namely, 6*l.* per ton for rods and bars. The small makers are reported to be in pretty full work for home consumption, but on the whole the trade is represented to be not in the most satisfactory condition for the manufacturers.

* The architects have accepted the second proposition of the guardians, namely, 4 per cent. upon the cost of the building—that sum to cover the premium of 2½*l.*, the superintendence of the erection, &c., but exclusive of the remuneration to the clerk of the works. In reply to some architects who express their anxiety to call a meeting of the profession in that town, on the subject of competitions, we would suggest a postponement for a short time.—Ed.

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

The raising of the tube at the Britannia-bridge, Menai Straits, has been resumed, and there is now a clear height of 55 feet between the tube and high-water, so that small vessels sail beneath.——The contract for the formation of that portion of the Whitehaven and Furness Junction line which runs from Broughton to Bootle has been taken by Messrs. Fell and Joplin, of Greenodd, who intend to commence operations immediately, to be completed by April.——The total loss on the atmospheric experiment on the South Devon, after deducting the estimated value of materials on hand, is said to be 351,000*l.*——The foundations of the iron bridge over the Ouse, at Huntingdon, were commenced on Thursday week. The piles, or cylinders rather, are being driven, it seems, under a modification of Dr. Pott's process. Those forming the piers or supporters of the arches are about 9 feet long, and 4 in diameter. One of these having been sunk in the river, another is placed on the top of it, with a cap on the head of that, and all are made air-tight. Two large cylinders on the shore are then exhausted of air, and on turning a tap in a tube connecting them with those in the river, the air is suddenly transferred from one to the other, when the pressure of the atmosphere causes it to descend with considerable rapidity. In each case on Thursday, the tube was driven in 6 to 7 feet; and this process will be repeated till they are at the proper depth, when the water and soil will be taken from them and concrete introduced.——The engine-drivers on the Great Western have been receiving for the last five or six weeks, in addition to their wages, about 8s. a-week each as premium on the amount of coke saved by them below that fixed by regulation.——The wages paid to enginemen are:—Great Western, 5s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. a-day; Midland, 5s. to 7s.; York and North Midland, 4s. to 7s.; London and North-Western (Manchester and Birmingham division), 5s. to 7s.; Eastern Counties, 5s. to 7s. 6d.; North British, 5s. to 6s. 10d.; Edinburgh and Glasgow, 3s. 6d. to 7s.; Perth and Dundee 4s. to 8s. The enginemen of the York, Newcastle, and Berwick have entered into a union to obtain—For merchandise and passenger traffic, 6s. for first year, 6s. 6d. for second, and 7s. afterwards. Those proposed by the company are—5s., 5s. 6d., 6s. 6d., and 7s. respectively.——The Great Western to Windsor was to be opened from Slough to Windsor on Monday last.——The works on the South Wales between Newport and Gloucester are going on rapidly: permanent way is being laid.——Two arches of the viaduct of more than fifty arches over the river Calder, near Whalley, on a branch of the Bolton, Clitheroe, and West Yorkshire line, gave way on Saturday last. The centres of several of the arches had been withdrawn on the previous day. Three lives were lost by the accident.——The survey of the intended line for Madras has been completed 13 miles, and the results, it is reported, are favourable, so far as regards engineering details. The road is almost level.——The calls advertised for October amount to 1,046,749*l.*: 11,100*l.* are on account of foreign companies. For the corresponding month of last year they were 1,693,655*l.* The total calls for the first ten months of 1849 now amount to 17,700,964*l.* against 30,072,610*l.* in 1845.

Working Class Club-houses.—The bakers are likely to have the honour of setting the first class example in carrying out the principles so long advocated by THE BUILDER, and successfully set agoing by the society for improving the dwellings of the industrious classes. A meeting of master and journeymen bakers was held on Monday week, at King's-cross, when it was resolved to have a building, with fifty or sixty bed-rooms, to be let at 2s. a-week each, with warm and cold baths, the former at one penny, and the latter one halfpenny each. All the daily newspapers and a select library to be provided, with a reading and coffee-room. The expenses were estimated at about 300*l.*, and the income at about 365*l.* per annum, leaving a balance in favour of the speculators of 65*l.* The assistance of the parent association was fully anticipated.

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